

the ground with their beaks, thus exposing whatever food items they were seeking. When the birds flew off at my approach I examined the disturbed ground and found several native snails. Some of the snails were alive with the shell complete, others had holes in the shells, obviously made by the feeding birds, and in others the shells were fractured. The shells were brown in colour and about  $\frac{3}{4}$  in. in length. I collected a number of undamaged specimens, which were later identified by Mr. A. R. Main as *Bothriembryon balteolus*.

Residents in the district told me that when there is a "plague" of these snails the Squeakers are about in large numbers.

Major H. M. Whittell (*W.A. Nat.*, vol. 3, 1952, p. 79) has reproduced field notes by the late S. W. Jackson, describing the feeding by Squeakers on tree-frequenting *Bothriembryon* in the karri forests of the South-west.

—K. G. BULLER, W.A. Museum, Perth.

**An Extension of Range of the Western Tiger Snake.**—The generally accepted distribution range of the Western Tiger Snake (*Notochis scutatus occidentalis* Glauert) in this State is the South-west, as far north as the Moore River. I was surprised, therefore, to kill a specimen of this form in the vicinity of a large dam at Nangetty Station, 16 miles north of Mingenew, on September 19, 1953.

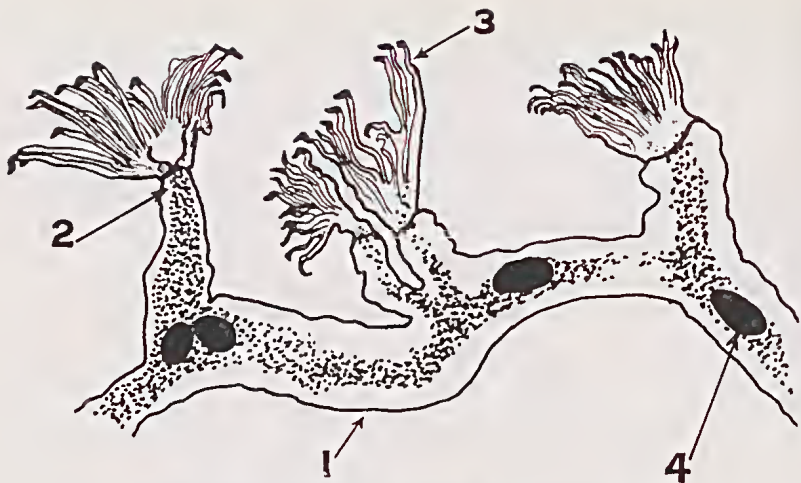
The colour of the reptile was blue-black above and pale beneath. It measured about 4 ft. 6 in. in length and was at first mistaken for a Mulga Snake (*Pseudechis australis* (Gray)). On being disturbed, however, it showed the characteristic aggressiveness of the Tiger Snake and flattened its neck when rearing to strike.

Unfortunately no facilities were available for preserving the snake but a careful examination was made of the sub-caudal scales, all of which were complete. This feature separates the Tiger Snake from the Mulga Snake (which has the terminal sub-caudals divided) and from the various forms of the Dugite or Brown Snake (*Demansia nuchalis*) (in which the anal and all the sub-caudals are divided).

—C. F. H. JENKINS, Agricultural Department, Perth.

**Fresh-water Polyzoa from Western Australia.**—E. J. Goddard ("Australian fresh-water Polyzoa," *Proc. Linn. Soc. N.S.W.*, vol. 34, 1909, pp. 487-496) listed genera and described new species of Polyzoa collected in Australia. Of the species listed by him *Plumatella repens* van Beneden had a cosmopolitan distribution. This wide range is presumably achieved by the aerial dispersal of the drought-resistant statoblasts.

The distribution listed by Goddard was extended by V. V. Hickman and E. O. G. Scott ("The occurrence of the fresh-water



*Plumatella repens*. Portion of colony, x 20.

1. Creeping cylindrical stolon. 2. Zooid. 3. Tentacles of lophophore. 4. Statoblasts.

Polyzoan, *Plumatella repens* van Beneden, in Tasmania," *Pap. Roy. Soc. Tas.*, 1932 (1933), pp. 7-9). With this extension the known distribution of *Plumatella repens* covered eastern Australia, from South Australia east and northward. The singular absence of reports from Western Australia was rather surprising and, since the Hamburg Expedition of 1905 (W. Michaelsen and R. Hartmeyer, *Die Fauna Sudwest-Australiens*, 1909-1936, vols. 1-4) had collected in a number of fresh-water localities and not reported Polyzoa, there appeared a prima facie case for believing in a complete absence of Polyzoa from the region. This, in view of the aerial dispersal already discussed, was difficult to believe and could only be effected by the unsuitability of local waters or other factors.

It is the purpose of this note to report that the author, in the company of B. A. Main, and A. K. Lee, in November 1952, searched extensively in Bibra Lake for Polyzoans and B. A. Main had the good fortune to find a well-developed colony of zooids with reproductive bodies on a reed stem in shallow water.

A comparison of the colony and statoblasts with descriptions in the literature revealed the identity of the specimen as *Plumatella repens*.

The accompanying figure showing the branching, adherent tubes of the colony enclosing numerous statoblasts, and zooids with the characteristic lophophore, will facilitate field identification.

No other colonies were located at Bibra Lake but it is unlikely that this animal is limited in distribution in Western Australia and search on shaded, submerged vegetation in suitable fresh waters may yield further data on the distribution of this species.

—A. MAIN, Zoology Department, University, Nedlands,